

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8897

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 5708

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, CH

SUBJ: CHINESE COMMENTS ON OLCHEV RETURN TO PEKING

1. TWO CHINESE DIPLOMATS, IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFF MAY 18, EXHIBITED LESS PESSIMISM ABOUT SINO- SOVIET BORDER TALKS THAN USUAL IN PAST DISCUSSIONS OF THE SUBJECT. BOTH RESPONDED THAT THEY HAVE NO INFORMATION FROM PEKING SINCE THE RETURN THERE OF SOVIET NEGOTIATOR ILICHEV, OR ANY KNOWLEDGE THAT ILICHEV CARRIED NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS. BUT ONE AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE LOGICAL AT THIS POINT IN TIME FOR SOVIETS TO BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN SHOWING PROGRESS IN BORDER TALKS AND SAID ONE CAN ONLY WAIT AND SEE WHAT TRANSPIRES. THE OTHER COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW WHAT ILICHEV HAD IN HIS POCKET.

2. COMMENT: WE REPORT ABOVE CONVERSATIONS MERELY AS HIGHLY SUBJECTIVE INDICATION OF MOOD OF CHINESE HERE, WHO DO NOT NOW SEEM TO AUTOMATICALLY WRITE OFF POSSIBILITY OF MOVEMENT ON BORDER TALKS AS THEY HAVE DONE IN PAST. THEY DID NOT, HOWEVER, TAKE ANY LESS ANTI- SOVIET LINE THAN USUAL (SAMPLE: MILLION TROOPS ON BORDER SHOWS SOVIETS DO NOT INCLUDE CHINA IN DETENTE SCHEMES).
DUBS

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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